

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

Page 8, line 1, change "Patent Claims" to --What is claimed is:--.

Claims 1-15 (cancelled).

16. (New) A method for the structured metallization of polymer substrate materials and ceramic substrate materials, comprising the steps of:

applying a surface-activatable compound containing a nonconductive organic transition metal complex as surface-activating compound, a dicarboxylic acid as cross-linking agent, and melamine resin as complexing agent is applied to the substrate material by suitable coating;

selectively irradiating the surface-active compound by light; and

subsequently carrying out an electroless metallization of the irradiated areas to form metallic structures in a chemically reductive bath.

17. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the surface of the substrate of a polymer material is pretreated chemically, physically or thermally in order to roughen it.

18. (New) The method according to claim 17, wherein the substrate is pretreated by etching the substrate surface.

19. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein the etching solution is a hydrochloric acid solution diluted in water.

20. (New) The method according to claim 18, wherein the etching process takes place by heating the etching solution.

21. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the transition metal complex contains palladium.

22. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the nonconductive surface-activatable compound is dissolved in a solvent and applied to the substrate in the form of a liquid.

23. (New) The method according to claim 22, wherein the solvent is tetrahydrofuran,

24. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the light is laser irradiation at a wavelength of less than 600 nm.

25. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein the laser radiation is generated with a frequency-doubling or frequency-tripling Nd:YAG laser ( $\lambda = 532$  nm or 355 nm).

26. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein the laser radiation is generated by an argon-ion laser ( $\lambda = 488$  nm).

27. (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein the removal of non-irradiated surface-activating compound after irradiation is carried out in tetrahydrofuran.

28. (New) A surface-activating compound for activating the surface of a polymer substrate or ceramic substrate for electroless metallization comprising a nonconductive organic transition metal complex as activating compound, a dicarboxylic acid as cross-linking agent, and melamine resin as complexing agent.

29. (New) The surface-activating compound according to claim 28, wherein the activating compound is a transition metal complex based on palladium and the dicarboxylic acid, as cross-linking agent, is maleic anhydride.

30. (New) The surface-activating compound according to claim 29, wherein the compound, in relation to a solvent proportion of 100 parts by weight, contains 0.8 to 2.0 parts by weight of palladium diacetate, 5 to 15 parts by weight of melamine resin,

and 0.2 to 0.5 parts by weight of maleic anhydride.